



## Legislative News for the 11th District

*State Representative*

**ZACK  
HUDGINS**

**November 2003**

Dear Friends,

What a year it's been! When I was elected to the Legislature just 12 months ago, I knew I had a lot to learn, and I was full of enthusiasm to get started. Today my enthusiasm remains just as high, and I can confidently say that I've narrowed the knowledge gap dramatically. Each day I learn something new about how better to serve our community.

When I began my first legislative session, I knew we faced some of the most challenging issues in our state's recent history: a \$2.7 billion budget gap, transportation gridlock, improving our state's economic competitiveness, and protecting critical social services, just to name a few.

Throughout many committee meetings and floor debates, not to mention long days and nights, I've fought for responsible solutions to these problems and others, in a way that reflects the values of our community. In this letter I'd like to talk about what we did this past session and how it affects you.

I've learned a lot in Olympia, but I believe I've learned even more from neighbors like you. You've helped me better understand what you think about these issues through your thousands of letters, e-mails and phone calls, along with many invaluable face-to-face meetings here in the district. Your input is vital. Please keep watching our work in Olympia as we continue to face these challenges - challenges that require all of us to work together.

Thank you again for the opportunity to serve you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in green ink that reads "Zack Hudgins".

Rep. Zack Hudgins  
D-Tukwila

### **TO REACH ME:**

**PO Box 40600  
317 John L. O'Brien Building  
Olympia WA 98504-0600**

**Hotline: 1-800-562-6000**



*Rep. Zack Hudgins (top row, left) with students from Talbot Hill Elementary*

## The Operating Budget:

This year we had to create a budget that closed a predicted \$2.7 billion dollar budget gap. It was a formidable task, and there were no easy choices.

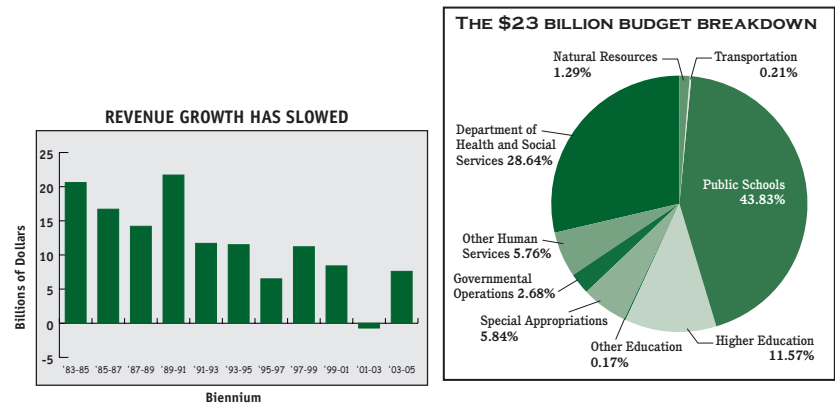
The shortfall was created – and made worse – by a combination of factors that aligned at the worst possible time: a persistent national recession, a big drop in revenues, initiatives that reduce state taxes, and soaring health care costs.

I had several reservations about this budget. For one, I believe that this budget cut too deeply into critical social programs. It also devotes too little to teachers, health care and state workers, all of whom voters have supported in recent initiatives.

On the positive side, the budget contains

no general tax increases. House Democrats also were successful in protecting several social service programs, ones that were gutted in previous versions by the Governor and the Senate, who relied on an all-cuts approach to the budget. For example, no child will be left out of the Children's Health Insurance Program, and mothers will still be entitled to prenatal care.

Here are a couple of graphs that help illustrate our budget situation:



## Funding Local Projects and Organizations

### The Capital Budget

Some people may not realize that our overall state budget is divided up into three parts. There's a transportation budget, an operating budget and what's called a "capital budget."

What's the difference? Obviously, the transportation budget covers our transportation spending. The operating budget basically covers almost everything else — state services from schools and universities, to social programs, and law enforcement.

The "capital budget" covers funds that are either given or lent to local governments or nonprofit organizations for infrastructure, housing, and cultural and heritage facilities.

The budget includes funding for the following projects/organizations in the 11th district:

- **\$300,000 for land acquisition on the Grandmother's Hill property**, an historical and cultural preserve, owned and maintained by the city of Tukwila, with management oversight by Cascade Land Conservancy in consultation with local tribes, The Burke Museum, and Friends of Grandmother's Hill (This grant supplements appropriations by the city and county, making this a true collaborative project.)
- **\$400,000 for Catholic Community Services** for emergency shelter meals, assisted living, child care, counseling, low-income housing, foster care, job training and refugee resettlement
- **\$350,000 for The Museum of Flight** to fund a multi-year archive project
- **\$50,000 for the Georgetown Community Center**
- **\$100,000 for the Showalter Playfield Lights**
- **\$800,000 for the Washington State Patrol** toxicology lab in Seattle
- **\$419,300 for Renton Technical College** for a portable building replacement

### The Economy:

#### Renewable Energy: Environmental and Economic Benefits

During the 2003 session I was proud to prime-sponsor a forward-looking bill on renewable energy sources. While most know of the environmental advantages, renewable energy has almost limitless potential in the form of jobs and economic development.

Energy shortages and the electricity rate fluctuations they bring are costly for businesses and individuals alike. By relying on more efficient standards, and by relying on natural sources such as wind, solar and thermal energy, we can “diversify” our energy sources thereby making energy more abundant, and minimizing fluctuations at the same time.

The bill would also help economic development in many rural areas through the potential manufacturing and installation of alternative power generating stations. Local farmers also benefit financially from hosting windmill facilities on their land. While this bill was not passed into law, discussions have continued during the interim, and I plan to reintroduce it in January.

#### Transportation

Earlier this year, I sent you information on our new transportation package. In short, the Legislature passed a tax package that is expected to raise about \$4.2 billion for statewide transportation projects during the next 10 years, primarily through a nickel-a-gallon gas-tax increase.

This crucial piece of legislation is the first step to getting our economy moving again, and will add thousands of family-wage jobs to our economy, when we need it most.

Projects include HOV Lanes on I-5 from Pierce County to Tukwila and on Highway 167 from 15th SW to 15th NW. Please contact my office for a complete list of the transportation projects for our district.



#### Boeing 7E7 Update

As you know, I have tried to stay in more-or-less continuous contact with constituents here in the 11th district to keep everyone up to date on the state’s attempts to win the construction of the Boeing 7E7. Boeing challenged competing states to meet a long list of requirements; all of the bills that Boeing identified as critical to its ability to thrive in Washington were approved in the past session, in addition to a tax-incentive plan.



It could be that Boeing will have announced its decision on this by the time you’re reading this newsletter. We’re all hopeful that we can retain as much of the Boeing economic engine in Washington as possible.

On a related note, Boeing announced not long ago that it was shutting down its Renton-based 757 assembly line. This potentially bad news was followed quickly by assurances from the company’s executives that the Renton jet plant itself was not closing, and that the working men and women at the plant would continue to build Boeing airplanes – just not the 757. This was very good news.

### Making Our Communities Safer

#### Liquor Licenses

This past session I successfully prime-sponsored a bill that allows the state to suspend liquor licenses for up to 180 days while more serious liquor license violations, such as those involving murder, assault or drug activity, are fully investigated.

With the previous standard 30-day suspension, businesses that used their liquor license recklessly could reopen and then go back to serving alcohol, even though in some cases the violation was grounds for a revocation of the license. Unfortunately, 30 days isn’t long enough to sort through some of the serious violations. This bill was signed by the Governor and is now law.

#### Email updates

During the year or so leading up to elections, legislators are under specific restrictions concerning publications and electronic communications. When these restrictions are not in effect, however, I offer regular email updates about my activities and the Legislature in general. It is a great way to stay in touch with what is going on locally, and if you’d like to be added to the distribution list, please send an email to [hudgins\\_z@leg.wa.gov](mailto:hudgins_z@leg.wa.gov) asking to be included.

# State Representative Zack Hudgins • Session Report 2003

## House Pages

The House is always looking for talented, energetic teens to help legislators during session. House pages are 14-16 year-olds who spend a week working at the Capitol. Page duties are varied. They range from ceremonial tasks such as presenting the flags to operational chores like distributing amendments during legislative sessions. Almost without exception, young people who are fortunate enough to take part in Washington's legislative page program – a program dating back to the state's territorial days – come away from the experience with greater insight into our system of government, and a commitment to help preserve it.

I would appreciate very much the opportunity to sponsor future leaders from the 11th district. Please contact my office for more information, or visit the page program's website at (<http://www.leg.wa.gov/house/hadm/pageprog.htm>).

## Health Care: Making Prescription Drugs Cheaper

After years of work, we were finally able to enact meaningful prescription drug reform that will save money for individuals, as well as for the state. It's a good program, and one that uses the efficiencies of the free market.

Basically, the program has two parts. The state, using a group of physicians, pharmacists and others, will compile a list of the best possible drugs in each category, based on cost and effectiveness. The state will then use its collective buying power to negotiate the lowest price for these drugs. However, doctors can still bypass this system and write, "dispense as written" if they do not want the drug in that category.

Even though the program is now limited to families who make less than \$27,000 or are over 50, it's a significant first step forward. We'll keep fighting to make this more accessible to others.



## Rep. Zack Hudgins - Fall 2003 Report to the 11th District

- State Budget & Local Spending
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- Fighting for the Boeing 7E7
- Community Safety
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## WHAT'S INSIDE:

Representative  
**Zack Hudgins**  
D-Tukwila  
317 John L. O'Brien Bldg.  
PO BOX 40600  
Olympia WA 98504-0600

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